

Victoria Street Newz

February/March 2005

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Vol. 1 No. 5

It's reigning, it's pooring ...

The Out Of The Rain Youth Shelter

Story and photo by Kelly Heggart - a 30 something, single mom with a 9 year old daughter, originally from Ontario. Her father, a great photographer, influenced her decision to pursue a career in professional photography and journalism, and she's currently attending full-time at the Western Academy of Photography.

Kelly invites comments and feedback at
kjheggart@hotmail.com



Imagine in your youth, your feet, cold and wet for days on end. Those "oh if we could talk" feet may have made the trek to the seasonal shelter for youth in Victoria. When summer winds down, and the vacationers go home, a lull falls over the city, and then the rains come. If you are homeless in this tourist mecca, this is just one more major thing you have to learn to deal with.

Jim Wilton has been a Youth Counselor at the Out of the Rain Youth Shelter in Victoria for a good part of its seven year history. His longevity, combined with a sense of humour and no nonsense attitude, make him a memorable, well liked character.

Wilton explains that youth have barriers to shelter. Some street youth complain of strict guidelines that other shelters adhere to such as having a no pets policy, or a zero tolerance of intoxication. This can be difficult if you have addiction issues but just need a place to lay your head.

"A drunk or stoned kid on the street in foul weather needs to be first in line," states Wilton. "They are often uneasy around older, seasoned, homeless people or do not wish to be separated from a boyfriend or girlfriend."

It is easy to see why these kids are lining up at 11 pm at the back door. They vie for one of thirty spots, a spot that consists of no more than a mat on the floor and sometimes just the gym floor. Cherished few belongings, stored in worn sacks and backpacks, are protected under sleeping heads by doubling as a pillow. These are tolerable conditions when the only other option is outside in the wind and rain.

The need for a youth shelter was recognized by local church groups and inner city social agency employees. They began to organize and came up with a plan to have seven locations as close to downtown as possible. Each would donate space, such as an unused gymnasium. If it had a minimalist kitchen, even better! Once the locations were established, they simply spread the word and opened the doors.

"Churches in the downtown core, and close vicinity, often recognize that they are inner city churches," states Diane, a volunteer at the shelter at sunrise, and government employee by day, who wished to remain anonymous.

Thankfully these churches opt to be part of the solution. They share a common philosophy with downtown social community partners, like the YM-YWCA. For the first three years, the shelter was run entirely on donated funds. Their concept, that several sectors of a community could work together to achieve a common goal, garnered federal funding in its fourth year. The downtown Y in Victoria oversees the administration and staffing of the seasonal shelter.

It's been raining unusually hard for the better part of 48 hours. It's still dark outside but Jim is cracking eggs and Diane is beginning to make French Toast for the twenty six kids, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five that litter the gymnasium floor at the First Metropolitan Church on the corner of Balmoral and Quadra Streets. Donations of food, from the Church community and the public, ensure that there will be a breakfast to cook. Diane is one of many volunteers who come in every morning to do this, and she justifies why she is there by saying, "I wanted a way to

(Continued on page 3)

About Street Newz

“Building Bridges within our Downtown Community”

The Victoria STREET NEWZ mission is to provide a voice, and income opportunities, for economically marginalized and/or socially disadvantaged people, at the same time offering employable skills training, increased self-esteem, confidence, and pride in accomplishments.

Victoria STREET NEWZ is sold by licensed vendors who sign a code of conduct. They buy the newspaper for \$.50 each, and resell them by donation.

You can contribute to social change by supporting the Victoria STREET NEWZ coalition and vendors, and by reading information that informs you directly about poverty and homeless issues. Please consider purchasing another copy later in the month, for a friend.

Victoria STREET NEWZ welcomes written submissions including interviews, event reviews, cartoons, poetry, photographs, or artwork, but we can't guarantee everything will be published. We reserve the right to edit, and will not print anything libelous, racist, sexist, or homophobic. Letters sent to the editor are assumed to be for publication, must include phone number or email (for confirmation), and may be edited for length.

Opinions expressed in this newzpaper are not necessarily those of Victoria STREET NEWZ, the editors, advertisers, contributors, readers, or publishers.

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Board of Directors: Petra Sinats, Penelope Shafer, Bob Ryder, Suki Athwal, Kim Fagerlund, Janine Bandcroft

Contents:

Out of the Rain - *Kelly Heggart*, pg 1 & 3
Anarchy Is As Anarchy Does - *Janine Bandcroft*, pg 2.
Inclusive Community Housing - *David Stott*, pg. 3
Letters and opinions, pg 4-6
Community Calendar, pgs 7-8
Food, Housing, Help, pg 9
Victoria Human Exchange Society, *Patricia Fitzgerald*, pg. 10
Bodhi's Path - *Robert Light Heart Jones* - pg 10
Toward a New Vision for Social Assistance Legislation (Part II), *Dr. Elinor Powell*, pg. 11
Ask Margaret Drysdale, pg. 12
The Occupation of St. Ann's, *David Arthur Johnston*, pg. 12
Oh Canada, *S.Shylene Schlackl* , pg. 13
A Room of Her Own, *Bernadine Sperling and Janine Bandcroft*, pg. 13,
Poetry, Art, & Music, pg 14
Community Supporters, pg. 15
About Victoria Street Newz, pg. 16

AnaRchY iS As aNarChy dOeS

Election season is upon us, a time for politicians to preen, promenade, and attempt to procure our votes. This is my first election as a self-defined anarchist, and the other day I found myself in another debate defending a word that consistently inspires fear-based visions of wild reactionaries literally smashing the state.

As Emma Goldman (1869-1940) put it, "to deal even remotely with all that is being said and done against Anarchism would necessitate the writing of a whole volume." More recently Noam Chomsky (1928 -) wrote "there have been many styles of thought and action that have been referred to as 'anarchist.' It would be hopeless to try to encompass all of these conflicting tendencies in some general theory or ideology.

"Anarchy" is a word, it seems, like the word "God." There are many who attempt to define it, or claim an understanding of it, but its nature is eternally elusive and indefinable.

Anarchy fits, philosophically, alongside an understanding and acceptance of myself a spiritual being, a tiny and unique expression of an enormous cosmic awareness to which we're all connected. Lately I've discovered the Quaker Society of Friends, and their traditional beliefs coincide with the good motherly advice that keeps me sane - all beings have a grain of goodness, within them (although sometimes it's awfully well hidden). Some refer to that spark of life as "God."

Anarchy also honours the individual, and the rights of that individual, within a collective called Society. Unfortunately, like the word "God," anarchy is often associated with violence. Despite attempts to limit and discredit it, however, anarchy enjoys a long literary, intellectual, and activist history. When I was travelling around the world, in the early '90s, its symbol was definitely the most predominant graffiti to be found.

William Godwin (1756-1836), husband to social reformer Mary Wollstonecraft and father to author Mary Shelley, is a renowned Anarchist. William examined the roots of government, and found that it was originally "intended to suppress injustice," offering a reaction to "the injustice and violence of men in a state of society."

Because government "was forced upon mankind [sic] by their vices," wrote Godwin, "so has it commonly been the creature of their ignorance and mistake." Government "gives occasion to wild projects of calamity, to oppression, despotism, war and conquest." It, government, "excites men to the practice of robbery and fraud" by "perpetuating and aggravating the inequality of property. Government was intended to suppress injustice, but its effect has been to embody and perpetuate it."

How many times have you had this conversation: "Politicians may start out with good intentions, but after being elected they inevitably become corrupt." Maybe the problem isn't with the people, but rather the structure they're forced to function within.

I think most Anarchists agree that government is rooted in theft and murder. Where we differ is in the ways we choose to express our dissatisfaction. I don't advocate violence, for example, but I do understand the source of the anger.

As Noam Chomsky has said, "No one owns the term 'anarchism.' ... There are many self-styled anarchists who insist, often with great passion, that theirs is the only right way, and that others do not merit the term [but] a look at the contemporary anarchist literature ... will quickly show that a large part of it is denunciation of others for their deviations."

Chomsky's own interpretation of anarchy is remarkably similar to Godwin's: "Anarchism, in my view, is an expression of the idea that the burden of proof is always on those who argue that authority and domination are necessary. They have to demonstrate, with powerful argument, that that conclusion is correct. If they cannot, then the institutions they defend should be considered illegitimate. How one should react to illegitimate authority depends on circumstances and conditions: there are no formulas."

Anarchist Peter Propotkin (1842-1921) wrote, "The history of human thought recalls the swinging of a pendulum which takes centuries to swing. After a long period of slumber comes a moment of awakening. Then thought frees herself from the chains with which those interested - rulers, lawyers, clerics - have carefully enwound her."

I want to thank the City of Victoria Staff, Mayor, and Council, for supporting Street Newz with their bylaws and their donation of \$500 in grant monies. They're the first level of government to endorse us, and we've been at it since April.

That's why I'm an anarchist. If governments aren't willing to support a project like this, then what is it they are doing to relieve poverty and homelessness?! Maintaining a corporate labour pool?

By the way, the Township of Esquimalt is propos ing changes to make room for Street Newz vendors - thanks to them for that. They've also released a draft bylaw that will impose fines on panhandlers and folks who sleep in their cars and, in the spirit of democracy, they're accepting input until February 4th after which time their proposed changes will be reviewed and possibly implemented. Please contact Norm Pugh, Development and Engineering, at 414-7147 for more information and send comments to info@esquimalt.ca or 1229 Esquimalt Rd., V9A 3P1.

Sources:

Noam Chomsky
<http://www.zmag.org/chomsky/interviews/9612-anarchism.html>
<http://www.spunk.org/library/intro/sp000281.html>

William Godwin
http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/godwin/PJfrontpiece.html

Emma Goldman
http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/goldman/aando/anarchism.htm

Peter Propotkin
http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/kropotkin/AM/anarchist_moralityl.html

"This province's funding for treatment facilities is miniscule considering the number of addicts in Victoria and Vancouver. It is also far less than the amount of funding invested into the other three drug strategy pillars. There are less than 100 detox beds in British Columbia for the 10,000 to 15,000 intravenous drug addicts who live in the province. Victoria has only seven."

Printed in *The Martlet*, Thursday, Dec. 2nd, 2004.

The Out Of The Rain Youth Shelter, con't from pg. 1

contribute that wasn't just putting a loonie in a hat. That doesn't do anything!" She then adds in a softer tone, "I have kids in their 20's. I often think, by the grace of God, there goes myself or my kids."

Sometimes the staff get to hand out toiletries, clothes, or blankets that have been donated. When asked what is the number one request, Wilton replies emphatically, "Socks! We need a lot of socks. Their feet are always wet!" New socks or mis-matched, as long as they are in decent shape and clean, the shelter could use them. It's a perfect solution for all those socks with mysteriously lost partners we seem to hang onto, in case the other shows up.

Socks, blankets, and sleeping bags are as freely available as the connections that are made here. Street youth are a marginalized, often hard to reach, reality among us and Out of the Rain provides an opportunity for relationships and referrals to relevant programming to be made. Need a nurse, condom, or vet for the pooch? Ask Wilton, a social concern guru of sorts. Maybe just a little friendly, non-judgmental advice? Well it's dished out here, as often as the hot meals.

David has soulful, dark eyes that seem a bit sad, or maybe it's boredom. He tells me he finds the sixteen hours a day that he wanders around Victoria boring sometimes. He arrived in Victoria from Thunder Bay Ontario 4 years ago and now, at the age of 25, he has been coming to the Out of the Rain shelter for three years. "I don't really believe in destiny, I was drawn out here," he says. "I'd never even heard of Crystal Meth until I came out here." Although each person has their own story, the similarities are there. Dave assures me that without the shelter, "I'd get stoned and walk around all night. I think that's what most kids would say."

David is a thinker and bright with a quiet demeanor. He gives the impression that he has spent a lot of time alone with his thoughts. The surgical steel ball that pierces his skin below his bottom lip, moves in and out as he speaks. "Street kids really need it!," he stresses in reference to the shelter. "We have an old guy that comes in here to make us pancakes at six in the morning! If it weren't for people like Jim, Sherri, Becky and the volunteers, some of these kids would be dead."

At 7:45 am, Becky, a recent social work degree graduate with a vibrancy and individualism all her own, drinks the last of her Red Bull Energy drink and attempts to rouse the last of the sleepers. They've given up breakfast for forty more winks. "You gotta get up, we're closing up in fifteen minutes!" she says loudly with the assertiveness and care of a den mother. The sun is up and what awaits beyond the shelter door is a day that promises little more than more rain.

Wilton is outside the shelter at the entrance door. With a lit cigarette hanging from his mouth, he works to sweep up every cigarette butt that was left behind on the asphalt. In a few minutes, every last trace of the Out of the Rain Shelter will be cleaned away, almost as if it didn't exist. Taking the scene in from the adjacent steps, David turns to look me in the eye for the first time and says, "Kids come here because they feel comfortable and safe." He looks away and focuses on Wilton, sweeping away, and adds with sincerity, "I admire the man greatly."

Some Services Provided By the Cool Aid Society
(thanks to Sarah for compiling this list)

1. **Emergency Housing:** Streetlink (7 bed for women, 48 beds for men) and Sandy Merriman (15 beds for women). Both have a limit of 7 days per month.

Streetlink: 383-1951
Sandy Merriman: 480-1408

2. **Long term housing:** Cool Aid is responsible for several housing projects, but they are administered through the centralized housing registry. They cannot give an exact wait time, as housing spaces are allotted by a board, based on their assessment of a person's or family's circumstances.

Housing Registry: 356-2548

3. **Medical Services:** available to anyone, even if they don't have a health card. Medical and dental care is available; they also have an acupuncturist, addictions counsellor, nutritionist, and visiting specialists.

Medical Clinic: 385-1466

4. **Research, Education, Evaluation, and Support Program (REES):** community programs for people with mental illness, including peer support, social activities, education, and a casual labour pool.

REES: 595-8619

5. **Message service:** A private phone message service is available for \$5.00 a month (no connection or equipment fees).

Phone message service: 383-1977



Inclusive Community Affordable Housing for Victoria

Can we, as neighbourhoods and municipalities, commit ourselves to making certain that all citizens have access to safe, affordable accommodation?

Growing numbers of Victoria residents are finding it increasingly hard to find this kind of accommodation and in many cases any accommodation at all. This includes not only the homeless, whose numbers have doubled over the last year, but also those at risk of homelessness. These are unemployed people, persons with disabilities and many working people who live in our neighbourhoods. When they are not able to find affordable housing, these residents are forced to live on the streets, in cars or "couch-surf" at other people's homes and apartments. Often they fall prey to the social ills that make daily headlines in our newspapers—drug use or dealing, prostitution, sleeping in doorways, etc.

How can we make certain that more, if not all, in need of affordable housing have access to this basic human need?

One way all of us can contribute to our community is by supporting initiatives that work at the local and municipal level to include rather than exclude those in need. This is sometimes referred to as inclusive community rather than exclusive community. This can include municipal and neighbourhood-based initiatives such as donating land or property or selling them at below market prices to affordable housing providers

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Concerned groups and citizens can also shape municipal government policy by supporting Inclusionary Zoning policies. This allows the development of affordable housing to become an integral part of other developments taking place in a community - through zoning ordinances, mandatory conditions, or voluntary objectives for the inclusion of below market housing in future market level developments. These policies typically set a minimum percentage, typically 10-20%, of units to be provided in a specific development affordable to households at a particular income level. In some cases the developer is offered an incentive such as bonus densities, tax abatements or other advantages. In California, over a 15-year period, over 20,000 units of affordable housing were provided through 50 inclusionary programs.

What is needed to make this happen?

Programs such as mixed housing in inclusive communities and effective inclusionary zoning practices are being undertaken throughout North America in higher income and higher priced housing communities, such as Victoria. What they require for success is a concerned citizenry and concerned municipal councils prepared to make inclusive community a reality. The Victoria Community Housing Trust believes that Victoria's citizens, who strongly support the principle of affordable housing, are prepared to begin this journey. We welcome the opportunity of working with other community groups and organizations to make this a reality.

For more information, contact the Victoria Community Husing Trust 201-531 Yates St. Tel. 360-0852, email: housingtrust@cedco.bc.ca

definitely ...

Street Newz appreciation

Dear Janine,

Today a friend gave me a copy of your Street Newz, and I am SO impressed!

I am sending you a subscription cheque by mail, but I just HAD to use e-mail to let you know immediately how much I admire and appreciate what you are doing!

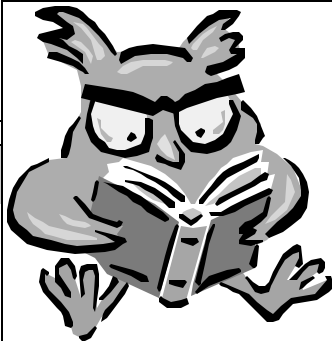
Especially the extensive Resource List is an excellent idea. What a valuable shortcut in the maze of often hidden or scattered information about help when you need it. Nor is its usefulness limited to Street People -- thousands of low-income seniors, for example, are often at a loss where to turn, and now you have provided a whole variety of resources all compact in one place. Brilliant! For that one thing alone you deserve praise and gratitude... and there is so much more!

I will pass my copy to friends and tell many more about it and urge them to buy when they see it sold on the street.

Nowadays, due to my deteriorated physical condition, I don't go out much, and rarely walk around downtown, so there's little chance I could personally purchase your paper from a street vendor. So the cheque is my best option. But when I do happen to have an opportunity, I will be very happy to buy it direct on the street from one of your friends.

Thank you, Janine, and all my best wishes to you and your co-workers and the people to whose cause you are giving your heart and energy.

Anna Galon



Saving Mount Arrowsmith

To whom it may concern @ WEYERHAEUSER

I am writing this note because I have recently become aware of the direction your actions are about to take; the continued path of destruction of Vancouver Island, namely the logging of the Mountain we so fondly call Arrowsmith.

I am a retired local businessman. I have lived on Vancouver Island for almost 40 years. I feel I have a right to speak, and be heard, on this issue.

This mountain sits near to a United Nations recognized significant site. We have very little left of this island...the very reasons that attract people to this place has almost been eliminated. The first growth timber...the "wildness" of it all....logging practices have destroyed this gift.

We need those trees. We as a human species need them alive. It is time that those of you that are in power over these kinds of things learn about the imminent destruction of humans on this planet. Before electricity about 15 species a year of all sorts were disappearing. Extinction. In the world of today; we have over 1500 being eliminated on a regular basis. All of this wanton destruction is due to the hand of man. You are in a position to say ENOUGH ALREADY; STOP NOW.

It is the future of human civilization on this planet that requires the tree huggers to act as they act. We as a species must all join hands and protect our home mother planet. There is a connection between the trees and our health. Removing the trees will eventually effect our health as a species. DONT THINK SMALL. Think about our PLANET.

If, for short term economic gain you find it necessary to continue logging practices as they are, then go ahead and do what you must do. But know in your heart that your children's children will suffer.

Please leave our mountain Arrowsmith unlogged.

Thank you
Len Walker

Divvying up the government surplus

When the government survey on how to spend the budget surplus arrived at my house I didn't respond. They probably wouldn't pay attention anyway, as in many other things, like that racist referendum on treaty rights. Hearing that only 1.6 million people received the surplus survey, however, made my hackles rise.

I called Gary Collins' office (387 3751) and requested 6 copies be mailed to my house, one for all of us low income folk whose opinion wasn't requested. Mine will specifically suggest affordable housing be a priority.

The ministers' office was very accommodating and even expedited the parcel to me with more copies than I had asked for! I think it would be delightful if they were inundated with calls from the low income folks they are trying to exclude.

If you don't have access to a phone, or a mailing address, why not drop into the Ministry of Finance office in the public library courtyard, ask for the surplus survey and put in your two cents for low income housing, or whatever.

Brooke Watson
Victoria



Towards a National Mental Health Policy

Saw Street Newz on TV tonight. Great idea, it's about time! I heard of a paper like this in Alberta.

Pacific South Western Advocates in Victoria, British Columbia have been researching police/hospital communications since 2001. Canadians and Americans are being told that one in five people have a mental illness, but one has to ask themselves how did they come up with that figure? People will usually not go and seek out mental health services themselves, it happens to be the police who introduce people to mental health services first. What we have unearthed is the abuse of power by police and hospital staff who are denying citizens their rights and freedoms in British Columbia when taken to ER for assessment!.

Very few police are trained in mental health crisis situations, yet police are very busy taking over 1,000 citizens a year to Royal Jubilee Hospital for assessment!

We have been in communication with police departments and mental health front line workers, in the US, the UK, and Canada.

Hospital staff want police to leave a written report as to why police take a citizen to their hospital. But many times police will only give a verbal report, many times the verbal report ends up being false information in a physicians consult report. This means that citizens are put on anti-psychotic drugs and held just because of information verbally communicated by police! Some citizens are being refused their rights at hospitals as well, by being medicated, detaining, strip searched, put in pajamas, and refused a phone call before seeing a psychiatrist against their will.

What we have been doing is writing government officials and advocating for a National Mental Health Policy for Canada.

The Canadian government is now considering a National Mental Health Strategy, and the final report by the Senate Committee will be presented to government in Nov. 2005. Citizens can give to the senate their own stories regarding mental health rights violations etc. The Senate's web site can be found under links at www.broadpowers.com.

Some hospitals will refuse to take people who do not have a treatable mental health problem, this could be why so many people are on the streets!

Wealthy seniors could lose everything if taken by police to hospital where an ungrateful son or daughter gives police false information which then gets passed onto hospital staff in a verbal report by police. And by the way, the BC government shut down the Mental Health Advocacy Office!

Mental health is an issue that not many discuss, but if you want to get people talking about it and expose what is happening, send us an E-mail at gws2004@telus.net

Looking forward to your response.

Gordon W. Stewart Director
Pacific South Western Advocates
Victoria, British Columbia
gws2004@telus.net

Medieval Europe and its descendents

To the editor

There are more people on the street of Victoria than there need be, and this makes business difficult, however there are other approaches than this legislation and its enforcement. Purely punitive approaches would only generate numerous other unpleasant outcomes that would ultimately change the status quo of everyone else outside of the realm of street life.

Earlier this week a man ran up to me just before I boarded a bus and asked "sir, can you give me any money!" I was startled, he was not a threat and not aggressive, but just a bit overwhelming. After, I realized that the force and volition in his plea in his asking was really for mercy and compassion. His face beared some deformity, definitely a defenseless fellow. This man no doubt knew that directive of the legislation would not only put him off the street -- but to where (?).

Compassion is definitely not readily available in these times. In fact it's a bit like Medieval Europe. And perhaps that fellow I encountered was a descendent of Quosimotto.

Sincerely,
Daniel Miller

... not ...

Contemplating equality

The notion of equality has become a very prominent element of our social psyche, since the civil rights movement in the United States 40 years ago. Few will argue that it is a positive change in every respect, and long over due. But the notion of equality still has some serious flaws to iron out!

The problem with trying to treat everybody equal is that you can't treat everybody equal unless you do so on a very personal level. If, for example the state offers two individuals social assistance in the form of a monthly cheque to cover living expenses, and one of the two suffers from untreated schizophrenia, even though the assistance is of the same value the outcome will, of course, favour the healthier of the two individuals! The state has failed to achieve equality!

This equality problem is starting to evolve. The schizophrenic, in this scenario, will by today's standards (in Canada at least) receive recognition as having a handicap but he or she will still be lumped together in a group and treated with all the equality afforded the group and no more. The needs of the individuals in the group will all be different (to a greater or lesser degree) and will therefore need to be addressed on a personal basis if equality is to be achieved.

Those with hidden or undiagnosed disabilities are lumped in with the group labeled "general public," even though their challenges can be much greater - extreme, in some cases.

Society is slowly and reluctantly beginning to recognize people with these types of challenges. In the past and still (to a lesser degree) when life became too difficult for these people we offered them a nice cozy street to live in or we incarcerated them. I've heard it referred to "falling through the holes in the social fabric."

Society can only benefit from bringing this fabric up to a standard where no one is allowed to fall through. The gains are not immediately recognizable but when you consider all the costs to society, minus the productivity of this segment of society, the price tag of our apathy is enormous!

Vincent Van Gogh was one of these people. He eventually died at 37, from a self inflicted gun shot. What a shame.

Glen Peters

The Bear Clan of Maxan Lake

Being Indigenous and disabled, is a double disability in any country. As a disabled person, forced to live in an electric scooter, possibly for life, has taken a huge chunk out of my lifestyle. In my earlier years, I tried hard to become something so that I would be useful to live. I wanted to be an Indigenous Lawyer. But the powers that be, thought different of me, because I was an very outspoken Indigenous person, who only wanted a better life for all our indigenous people. Being a woman, was also another disability.

During my lifetime, I was fighting so that we, as The Bear Clan of Maxan Lake, could have a home to live in, on our own sacred lands. Then we could think of education and everything else that follows. The Bear Clan have been homeless too long. Many of us are denied the so called free medical, that the Department of Indian Affairs, is suppose to look after. We are also denied the free education, and the free housing, and denied so many things. These are many of the reasons why I was so outspoken, in the past. These are also the reasons, why I am a disabled person today.

Police brutality is one of the many causes of my disability. Police brutality is also the cause of many other indigenous peoples disability. One day, the police will have to get on the same side as us. In order for things to get any better. As long as the police hate, discriminate, harass and intimidate the indigenous people, things will not get any better. Plus we should be allowed to get compensated for all the past police brutalities, that we encountered.

The authorities and all level of governments, should abide by this United Nations latest ruling, regarding disabled people:

UN MARKS DAY OF DISABLED PERSONS WITH CALL FOR THEIR FULL INCLUSION IN SOCIETY

www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/note5907.doc.htm

Helen Michel
telquaa@hotmail.com

buying redemption?

To the editor,

This whole "Asian tsunami donating" thing is starting to develop an odd smell. It's a smell vaguely familiar, but not so clear that it is easy to identify straight away. What started as a sensible response to a large natural disaster involving loss of life and property on the other side of the world is now becoming something else I think.

The "other side" is a place we have no traditional interest in saving from anything other than 'communism'. I seem to recall that one of the things that really irked the materialistic, competitive and perhaps even a bit self righteous Protestant reformers was the unsavory practice of selling redemptions to the nasty old rich folk back when the Italians were purveyors of the dominant religion in Europe.

The basic gist of this practice was that if you could afford to pay the church you could buy off some guilt or have some crime annulled (yours or a dead relative's) and assure a good standing in the book of life. The New Advent online Catholic Encyclopedia puts it like this "the fundamental idea was reparation in proportion to the number and gravity of the sins, as it were a "wergild" paid to God and the Church."

What smells odd is the appearance of some rather nasty players making big about their competitive contribution "setting a new bench mark of giving" or "the largest sum yet given." The one that started me wondering was the B.C. Finance Minister announcing an \$8,000,000.00 donation; the "largest of any province yet" he pointed out (God knows Ralph will have to do better.) This particular Minister's policies are responsible for a great deal of misery on the streets of B.C. To this we could add all the wars and starvation all around the debt laden world caused for the most part by the "look at my big donation everyone" corporate sponsors and their "I have forgotten my real propose" government lackeys.

Although the aid organizations and media don't intend to be selling redemptions, the media have a bad habit of over doing things to the n'th degree if they can be sentimental about it. Remember the little girl down the well story? The players here are the "Church" as aid organizations and the media as "priest" passing the message up to Jesus and of course the nasty old sinners are still nasty old sinners. Competition is a sacred cow in western cultures.

Our media are not to be blamed for their coverage of this event, after all, there are a lot of babies down a lot of wells there. The issue is always, why people in those industries choose some babies and not others? Our media need to sort out for themselves the difference between sentiment and love I think. One great difference between sentiment and love is: love is unconditional. Minds can sentimentalize, but are best suited to solving problems.

Hearts on the other hand, know what those problems are. How these same hearts manage to step around dying souls on our own sidewalks is a mystery or a propaganda miracle.

The problem with the "gift redemption" is that it goes without repentance and requires no real love. No one can buy redemption; if you want to donate, just donate and shut up about it. Unless, of course, you have some other intention.

The general pattern of foreign aid goes something like this:

1. Poor country needs aid.
2. Rich country sends food and money.
3. Poor country buys (from rich countries) weapons with the money sent.
4. Poor country sells food on open market (highest \$ bidder) and buys more weapons.
5. Life and love are lost.

Because, poor country is poor, there is internal strife about who gets fed and who farts through silk. As we know, Indonesia is torn by civil war (GAM insurgency in Aceh) and aggressive wars with others. Indonesia has a population of 203.4 million, not helpless, people and lots and lots of trucks. The roads in Indonesia are largely unaffected by the wave on the beach and foreign "aid" is "piling up at airports" and no doubt shipping ports. Ports to watch for cheap food deals Cilacap, Cirebon, Jakarta, Kupang, Makassar, Palembang, Semarang and Surabaya. Much the same could be said of Sri Lanka with it's Tamil Rebels. Our policies should be guided by our hearts and careful thought in this matter as sentiment will not bear fruit and "gift redemption" won't let us off the hook when things go badly for others.

Allen Patten
Victoria, B.C.

back to the future

My admiration for what you are attempting.

I grew up during the Depression of the '30s. I can remember men standing on street corners, pencils in one hand and a tin cup in the other. The comic strip "Apple Mary" followed the adventures of an old woman selling apples from a box stand in the street. These people had the dignity of struggling with misfortune & were not beggars. Apples, pencils, Street Newz – all are symbols of bravery and hope.

Constance Caunt
Victoria

... the last word

Free the Weed

by cyann ray

Recently, an adorable black lab singled me out from a group of 300 travellers disembarking the Clipper. Once pulled aside by a custom's official I was asked a series of questions which I answered honestly and with no shame.

I was surprised and a little amused that after travelling through several American airports, it was the Canadian authorities in my own backyard detaining me for being a pothead (aka : regular marijuana user). I tried to keep my responses brief and curbed my politics, thinking this likely wasn't the time to be a pro-pot advocate. However, I was able to remind my uniformed interrogator that our federal government DOES recognize the therapeutic qualities of marijuana and supports the ingesting of said weed by certain individuals.

There are currently about 750 Canadians with assorted health issues who have been granted permission from Health Canada to produce, possess and consume cannabis (ref: Canadians For Safe Access, Nov.'04). This is a mere fraction of the millions of Canadians who actually use pot (300,000 in B.C. alone). Since I am no fan of bureaucratic hoop-jumping or wasting the time of doctors, I am not one of those folks despite my eligibility. Besides, after nearly 30 years of toking I hardly feel I need to justify my usage or be granted permission, especially by a group of ill-informed suits in Ottawa with a questionable agenda and an unimpressive track record. (It's taken Health Canada 5 years to process those 750 individuals!).

Numerous research studies have consistently shown the medicinal properties of marijuana as well as its relatively benign nature (see resource list). In fact, "marijuana is one of the safest therapeutically active substances know to man [sic]" (Francis Young, administrative law judge, U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, '88). Knowing this, doesn't it seem absurd to view marijuana usage as a crime? Doesn't it seem unjust to continue prosecuting pot smokers?

According to the recent Senate report, 700,000 otherwise law-biding Canadians have criminal records because of marijuana and "Canada arrests more people per capita for cannabis than any nation in the world other than the U.S." (Up In Smoke , Philippe Lucas, Nov. '04).

If our government now knows the truth about marijuana, why don't they just legalize it? If an individual finds relief from ingesting this natural, herbal remedy and experiences no adverse affects, then why do the powers that be continue treating this as a criminal activity rather than a health issue? Don't let anyone tell you it's "harm reduction". A zillion people have died from alcohol and tobacco yet these lethal substances are not only legal, but government subsidized.

Marijuana had been recognized as medicine and listed in pharmacopoeias until the 1940's. The only reasons I can see for it now being illegal are political and economical. Our big brothers to the south have turned incarceration and prohibition into big business. Decriminalizing marijuana would not only create huge unemployment within the penal system, but there would be a lot of confusion and embarrassment regarding the State's infamous "Just Say No" campaign.

To align he effects of marijuana usage with that of heroin, cocaine, LSD, pharmaceuticals, alcohol, tobacco and even caffeine is simply wrong, yet this misinformation continues to penetrate the masses. Pharmaceutical companies are also big businesses with a vested interest in keeping pot illegal. Despite numerous, unpleasant and often serious side effects (including death), many folks are just more comfortable taking pills than using marijuana because pill popping is not against the law.

It's unfortunate that so many people have been victimized by anti-pot propaganda. These brain-washed nay-sayers are holding us all back. Rather than questioning me for smelling like pot, wouldn't it be in the public's greater interest if that dog at the Clipper could spot those folks who drank their way across the Strait and planned to drive home?

Resource List:

Canadians For Safe Access...<http://www.safeaccess.ca>
Canadian Cannabis Coalition...<http://www.cannabiscoalition.ca>
Canada Medical Marijuana...<http://www.medicalmarijuana.ca>
Drug Sense...<http://www.drugsense.org>
Health Canada...<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/ocma/>
Norml Canada...<http://www.normlcanada.org>
Cannabis Health...<http://www.cannabishealth.com>
Cannabis Research Institute...www.cannabisresearchinstituteinc.com



a meditation on "everyday is ashura"

If we are to do and live in the way of life of the inner and outer (Batin and Zahir = Jihad and mujahada), and not the metaphor of existence of flesh failed obsession and fear, then we must self actualize/self determinize and centre ourselves in relation to the deen and dunya following the flow of the most high philosophy our amir Ali (as) = "Be a friend to the oppressed and an enemy to the oppressor" he said.

It is true we shouldn't be afraid of martyrdom, however, we should not be selecting and setting each other up for that position nor should we be afraid to hold up the images of our martyrs and shout out their names and certainly continue the fight and struggle. What is the trap of the west? to think, as Gil Scott Heron observed, that the Calvary always comes to save the day and that the hero lives to see the glory of that day.

to my peoples I wanna testify...

I have seen too many people murdered and demoralized, in this land, which is suppose to be so civilized. I have seen my fathers mind destroyed and my body and my friends raped and used, as has been our minds, and then discarded as worthless tools for the amusem ent and advancement of robberbarons and the fools they court. I have heard and seen people use our skin and class to advance their position/friendship with the oppressors and danced on the graves of our martyrs. I have fought my selfDIstruction and asked; why is this a daily constant?.

...B.U.T. are my bruthas defenseless against the shocktroops and their voting polls they treat as religious icons? or have they been convinced of this lie... in this place, my colleague referred to as a "benevolent dictatorship"...

...do my bruthas wish to smash the treble and live this life with bass?
...is this the riddim of the meditation of revolution and being an enemy of oppression

...and I wonder is this the beginning of a revolution or is it too late.

Lawrence Y Braithwaite (aka Lord Patch)
New Palestine/Fernwood/The Hood

This is an excerpt from an essay Lawrence has published at
<http://resist.ca/story/2004/7/27/202911/746>

Lawrence also recommends the following websites:

Anarchist Archives
dwardmac.pitzer.edu/Anarchist_Archives/haymarket/augustspies.html

Mysterious Death of Native Artist: Anthany Dawson
<http://victoria.indymedia.org/news/2004/04/24950.php>

<http://resist.ca/story/2004/6/26/11430/2391>

<http://victoria.indymedia.org/news/2004/01/20251.php>

To the editor:

When our provincial Liberal government promotes gambling and then uses the huge amounts gained too benefit their political position, it reminds me of an athlete on steroids. We all know what eventually happens to the super star sports hero...Thank you..Bob Ritchie Qualicum

working on survival

So I've been doing "casual labor" out of Labor UnLimited on Douglas Street. Casual labor is like casual sex, in that the likelihood of exploitation is maximized. I need the work for a little while anyway, and they have the power, every morning, to pick me or pass over me. But I have started thinking about what a decent casual labor system would be like.

Oddly enough, my biggest complaint is the main thing they do to soften the experience - they show movies on a TV to the workers who are waiting, often for hours, for paid work. The movies are full of vulgar violence, which I find very disturbing.

A "captive" audience like that could be enriching their lives during those hours. They could learn work skills such as first aid, tools, terminology...or more general life skills - math, music... but it would take people with a higher shared level of discipline and self-respect than the ones they seem to want.

Some agency in town started a day labor setup, years ago, but I don't think it's running now. I'm hoping you might find this idea of some interest. I am trying to finally learn the guerilla's rule - choose battles you can win, and stay invisible the rest of the time.



Community Calendar

Street Newz offers no guarantees that following information is accurate, or that the events will actually occur.
Contact events@pej.org with corrections, additions, event reviews, or to receive a free weekly email listing of peace, earth, and justice events.

Mondays	Movie Monday - by donation - 595-FLIC or www.islandnet.com/mm
Alt Mondays	Victoria Peace Coalition - dolcla@islandnet.com
Alt. Mondays	Communities Solidarity Coalition - www.communities-solidarity.org , info@communities-solidarity.org
Tuesdays	THE MILK JUGgernauts - (250) 479-3374 - spiltmilk@centralmail.com - www.spiltmilkcomedy.com
Tuesdays	Ongoing meditation group, open to all sincerely interested in individual awakening and planetary healing and transformation. 7:30-9 pm . For more information, call Leonard at 598-4303 or celestialleo@hotmail.com .
Wednesdays	Falun Gong. faluninfo.net . Fernwood Community Association, 1923 Fernwood. Victoria. 5-7 p.m. Info: (250)386-8805 .
Wednesdays	Peace Vigils at the Legislature - 7:00 - 8:00 pm - Everyone Welcome!
Wednesdays	SOLID (Society of Living Intravenous Drugusers) except welfare day, 7:00-9:00 pm , 1947 Cook St. \$3 bus fare reimbursed
Thursdays	Drum Circles Drop-in 1110 Caledonia & Cook. Drums available. riversofrhythm@hotmail.com , or 250 701-0408 (to Mar 3rd)
Thurs (1st&3rd)	Talking Tables, Story telling and story listening opportunity. Sidewalk Cafe, Fairfield Plaza, 7.30 - 9 info: 478 9795,davidwolks@shaw.ca
Friday nights	Coffeehouse discussion group 7:30 pm JJ's c coffeehouse in Brentwood Bay 7:30 pm Info: sue_stroud@hotmail.com
Fourth Fridays	Café Simpatico, Activist coffeehouse,1923 Fernwood. Doors at 7 pm. casc@telus.net , 598-7690, communitypipe.org
Saturdays	Plastic Recycling - Accepting soft & hard plastics: styrofoam blocks & chips, plastic bags, and rigid plastics. Info: 382-4604.
Last Sundays	Spilt Milk Family Fun Series Info: (250) 479-3374, spiltmilk@centralmail.com , www.spiltmilkcomedy.com Audience driven performances inspire childrens' ideas . 2:00 pm , Gibson Auditorium, Camosun Lansdowne Campus.
Alt. Sundays	Sierra Club Nature Outings - Call Nikko for more details at 386-5255 x241, www.sierraclub.ca/bc
Sundays	Victoria Folk Music Society 7:30pm , Norway House www.pacificcoast.net/~vfms or 413-3213, 24 hrs.
Sundays	Spoken Word at the James Bay Inn Pub members.shaw.ca/jbisundays , 721-WORD, 8pm
Sundays	Newcomer Youth Group, 12-18 yr immigrants, refugees, int'l student youth, 1-3 pm , @ICA-930 Balmoral. Info youth@icavictoria.org
Monthly	Faith in Action-a multi-faith coalition to put more heart into BC's income assistance. www.bcfaithinaction.ca
to February 21	A Gentle Migration. UVic Grad Mark Laver's 2004 studio works (250) 721-6562, maltpub@maltwood.uvic.ca , www.maltwood.uvic.ca .
to February 24	25th Annual Art Ed Faculty Exhibit & Retrospective Email: maltpub@maltwood.uvic.ca Ph: (250) 721-6562
to March 3	Victoria: Ecstatic Dance Classes Live percussion & didj accompaniment, Instructed by Navaro Thursdays 615-730 pm , drop-in 1110 Caledonia & Cook at rear Info: riversofrhythm@hotmail.com , or 250-701-0438
Feb & March	Travelling World Community Film Festival , Vancouver, Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Salt Spring. Info(250) 335 3262, glenette@telus.net
Feb 1-4th	"The Media as the Judge: The case of accused Eco-Terrorist Tre Arrow" Info: dlrubin@telus.net , ingkhai@uvic.ca
February 1st	OPEN CINEMA - Culture Jam, Hermann's, 7 pm , Info: mandy@opencinema.ca smayzell@shaw.ca , (250) 882-7441 (250) 883-5194
February 2nd	Special Forum: The War on Democratic Rights, Vancouver. Info: contact@stopwar.ca .
February 2nd	Parksville Seniors' Care Forum, Parksville Community Ctr, 132 Jensen Avenue East, 7-9 PM . Info: rmsullivan@shaw.ca , 250-752-1345
February 3rd	Public Forum: Social Movements & Political Reality Free Admission. 7:30 pm , UVIC MacLaurin Info: 595-7519 or bbcf@islandnet.com
February 3rd	Cannabis for Health and Nutrition David Anderson's Office, 970 Blanshard, 12 pm Info: 250-381-4220
February 3rd	Agri Food Road Show for Food & Beverage Producers & Processors -Duncan, 1-4 pm , Info 250-746-1004, www.ccednet-rcdec.ca
February 3rd	Youbou Timberless Soc., Duncan "EXPORTING JOBS," Travelodge, 7-9 Info: savebcjobs.com , (250) 386-5255, papa.ken@shaw.ca
February 4th	"Speaking of Sex" a presentation by Meg Hickling, sexual health educator, 7:30 PM Gibson Auditorium, Camosun College Info: 592-3479
February 4th	Conference on Imperialism, War and Resistance, UVic, David Strong Building Room C122
February 5th	An Art Lover's Affair. Sale of original and re-purposed art to support ICA's arts programs, Info: 388-4728
February 5th	WAVES of Healing Sounds Dance, Duncan.. A family event. . 8-12:30, Doors 7:30 p.m , Mercury 331 Brae Ave.
February 5th	A Canadian Refugee Camp. Resisting Fortress North America, Vancouver Art Gallery, noon-5 pm. Rally at 1 pm , various community Info: noi-van@resist.ca . Tel: (778) 885-0040. harjap.grewal@mail.mcgill.ca
February 5th	Connecting Communities Festival, Duncan United Church, 246 Ingram St., 11 am to early evening. Info: 748-3975 or info@folkfest.bc.ca
Feb 5th & 6th,	Interpretation Canada Training Module, Nanaimo, BC. For environmental education, nature or historical museums, conservation organizations, cultural or arts centres or tourism companies. Info: dhill@uniserve.com or (250) 753-5246 or www.naturepark.com/idad .
February 6th	The Belfry's Worldplay presents a staged reading of <i>Boxcar</i> , a Chicano play by Sylvia Gonzalez S. about the harrowing experiences of Mexican migrants looking for a better life in the USA. Info: www.belfry.bc.ca/
Feb 8th-9th	Building Sustainable Relationships: Aboriginal Engagement & Sustainability Conference www.cbsr.bc.ca/csrevents/vancouver.htm .
February 8th	Belfry's <i>Corker</i> , written by former MP Wendy Lill, fundraiser for SE Asia www.belfry.bc.ca/shows/m03-corker.html , 250-385-6815.
February 10th	Agri Food Road Show for Food & Beverage Producers & Processors, Nanaimo 1:30-4:30, Info: 250-753-9393, www.ccednet-rcdec.ca
February 11th	Victoria Independent Film & Video Festival Shin Dig 2516 Douglas St. (at Bay), Info: thefifty_fifty@hotmail.com , thefiftyfifty.org .
February 11th	Free Mumia, mass international demonstration Info: icffmaj@aol.com , 215-687-1147, info@leonardpeltier.org
February 12th	Inspiration to Action: Forum for Youth on Fundraising, Queen Alexandra Centre for Children. Www.unitedwayvictoria.bc.ca (Click on Youth Now) or call Shaleen Jones at 385-6708. shaleen@unitedwayvictoria.bc.ca , 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
February 12th	Dance for Organics, Vancouver Capri Hall (3925 Fraser St. at King Edward) 6:00-11:00 pm . Info: www.organics.bc.ca .
February 12th	Resist 2010 & Delta Hotels. Gather @ Victory Square, 1 p.m. then march to Oppenheimer Park. To remind people that there can be No Olympics on stolen native land as the Secwepemc, St'at'imc, Cheam and other communities are fighting ski resort development, including hotels like Delta which is now the target of an International Boycott. Info: noi-van@resist.ca or 778-552-2099.
February 13th	10th annual "Dances with Dragons" (set inside the Chinese New Year Parade), 10:45 am-1 pm, 375 East Pender Street, Vancouver (Chinese Mennonite Church) Info: CCIA < ccia@shaw.ca >
February 14th	Compassion in Action free vegan lunch for those in need. Info: veg@morethansolutions.com
February 14th	Eighth Annual Homelessness Radio Marathon, sunset to sunrise, www.homelessnessmarathon.org , ckut.ca/homeless.html
February 14th	Women's Memorial March, Vancouver, 12 noon , 410 Main St., Vancouver To commemorate the women in our community who die each

Community Calendar

	year due to violence and to remember the women who are still unaccounted for. This year we will honouring the memories of the now 29 Women who have died at the hands of alleged serial murderer Robert Pickton. Info: 604-254-0703, vdlc@telus.net
Feb 14th-17th	Eco-cultural Restoration Workshop - Galiano Island. Register by Jan. 7th Info: (250) 539-2424. galiano_conservancy@gulfislands.com.
February 15th	Demo the Legislature. Solidarity gives us all power. The demands made on this day will be the unified demands of the people. Info: (604) 682-2726, apc@resist.ca or apc.resist.ca. In Victoria, meet at Centennial Square at 1:30
February 16th	Agri Food Road Show for Food & Beverage Producers & Processors - Gulf Islands, Info: 250-537-4282, www.ccednet-rcdec.ca
February 17th	2nd Annual Café Cultura Coffeehouse. Solstice Café (529 Pandora), 7:30-9:30, Info: youth@icavictoria.org or 388-4728 ext.123.
February 17th	Fundraiser for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - BC Office. W/Stephen Lewis, UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa 8240 Fraser Street, Vancouver. Doors at 6 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Info: info@bccpolicyalternatives.org or www.policyalternatives.ca
Feb 18, 24th	25th Environmental Best Management Practices for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia, Ministry WLAP workshops, Victoria, Courtenay, Nanaimo. Info wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/bmp/urban_ebmp/urban_ebmp.html
February 19th	PUENTE Theatre's Long Ago and Far Away. 1983 Fairfield. 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. www.puentetheatre.ca. Featuring storytellers from many parts of the world, appropriate for all ages. Reservations recommended. Info: (250) 592-4367, (250) 721-5828, pts@victoria.tc.ca.
February 19th	Lunar Moon Festival Fundraiser Victoria Event Center 1415 Broad Street, 7 pm Info: 381-0862 or email antidote_victoria@hotmail.com
February 20th	Belfry Theatre presents Guantánamo: Honor Bound to Defend Freedom. 8 p.m., Info: (250) 592-4367, www.belfry.bc.ca/
February 23rd	Agri Food Road Show for Food & Beverage Prod & Processors, Strathcona, Info: 250-954-3770, www.ssfpa.net, www.ccednet-rcdec.ca
February 24th	Strategic Info & Communications Tech for Communities, pre-conf 1st Nations Tech Council. www.2005summit.ca/index2.htm
Feb 24-27th	Engineers Without Borders HIV Positive - AIDS through a new lens photo display, Info: acarruth@uvic.ca or www.ewb.ca.
Feb 25 -27th	Annual Conference and Trade Show: Seeds for the Future, Sidney Info: 250-385-7974. www.ssfpa.net/pages/sound_bits.htm
Feb 25-27th	Alberta Social Forum www.albertasocialforum.ca.
February 26	Autism Workshop, Nanaimo, BC. Info: 1-877-777-3530, www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/forms.htm, ACTBC@shaw.ca
February 27th	Agri Food Road Show for Food & Beverage Producers & Processors, Greater Vic, 4-7 pm Info: 250-954-3770, www.ccednet-rcdec.ca
Mar 28 - April	Peace Workshops, Sarajevo Info: 604-639-7910, academic@efpinternational.or, www.efpinternational.org.
March 1st-4th	CDC 2005: Building a Career Development Highway, Vancouver www.bccma.ca., info@bccma.ca.
March 5-6th	Reconnecting to Life: A Weekend Workshop, Vancouver. For refuge, renewal and a chance to get in touch with our true thoughts and feelings about our troubled world. Info: (604) 668-4802, email: info@hollyhockleadership.org, Online reg: www.hollyhockleadership.org.
March 15th	Ninth International Day Against Police Brutality, Vancouver. March through the streets starting at 7:00 pm at Victory Square on the corner of Hastings and Cambie Street. Info:"idapb idapb" <idapb@lycos.com>
March 15TH	Funeral March for the Hunted, DC to NYC Info: www.HOPE-CARE.org, Anthony-Marr@HOPE-CARE.org, 604-222-1169, 1-866-822-1169
March 15-20	Danny, King of the Basement, a story of bravery in the face of child poverty. At the Belfry, www.belfry.bc.ca/shows/fest-danny.html. Box Office (250) 385-6815, Admin (250) 385-6835, pr@belfry.bc.ca.
March 17-20th	The Land Trust & Stewardship Seminar Series, Naramata Centre near Penticton Info: 250-538-0112, Erika@landtrustalliance.bc.ca.
March 18	The Power Within Vancouver Convention Centre. Info: www.powerwithin.com. 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.
Mar 18 & 19th	2005 BC Youth Community Leadership Conference, Vancouver. Info: 250-213-2324, jaie.skalin@telus.net
March 19	PUENTE Theatre's Long Ago and Far Away, see Feb 19th
March 19-21	Global Days of Action Against War, Vancouver rally & march Mar 20th. Info: contact@stopwar.ca, www.stopwar.ca, www.zmag.org, www.unitedforpeace.org, www.haitiaction.net, www.stopwar.org.uk/, http://electroniciraq.net/, http://m20vancouver.blogspot.
March 21st	Anti-Racism Day.
March 20-26	Green Cuba Sustainability Tour led by GroundWorks Learning Centre. Info: (250) 360-0799 or info@gworks.ca.
March 26th	The Better World Handbook festival, Vancouver - Based on 7 foundations of a better world: economic fairness, comprehensive peace, ecological sustainability, democracy, social justice, simplicity, revitalized community. www.sefacfoundation.org/upcomingevents.html
Mar 28-Apr 1	Peacebuilding, Conflict Transformation, Post-war, Romania Info: 0040-264-420298, training@transcend.org, www.transcend.org/
April 10	8th Annual Corporate Piggy Awards, Victoria
April 16	PUENTE Theatre's Long Ago and Far Away, see Feb 19th
April 18 - 22nd	TRANSCEND Peace University (TPU), Romania, online. Info www.transcend.org / www.transcend.org/tpu
April 22-24	2nd Annual Exopolitics Expo (X-Conference) Washington, DC North/Gaithersburg. Info: Disclosure2003@aol.com, www.peaceinspace.org, www.exopolitics.com, www.peaceinspace.com
Apr 28-May 1st	Women's Rights & Freedoms: 20 Years in Equality - The Cdn. Charter of Rights and Freedoms prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, & other. Info: West Coast Legal Ed. & Action Fund - www.westcoastleaf.org or Nat'l Assoc. of Women & the Law - www.nawl.ca 604-684-8772, 1-866-737-7716 conference@westcoastleaf.org
May 3rd & 7th	Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) National Conference Info: 1-877-202-2268, info@ccednet-rcdec.ca
May 17	Election Day in British Columbia, Info: stvforbc.com, bc-stv.ca, www.fairvotingbc.com, citizensassembly.bc.ca.
May 17-20th	National Homeless Conf, Toronto, www.homelessconference.ca/home/index_en.html, 416-736-2100 ext. 40025, cch@edu.yorku.ca
June 9-11	North by Northeast Music Fest & Conference. Info: www.nxne.com, www.sonicbids.com, festival@nxne.com.
June 10-12th	Pacific Northwest Labour History Conference, and WOBBLIES' 100 year celebration www.pnlha.org.
June 10 & 11th	Thinking Through Action conference, Vancouver Facing today's struggles. www.sfu.ca/~thinkact/callForPapers.html
July 18-23	Writing Courses - Victoria School of Writing. Info: info@victoriaschoolofwriting.org, www.victoriaschoolofwriting.org. The 9th Annual Victoria School of Writing - will be held in a residential school located in a natural park-like setting in Victoria's Lake Hill district.

JUST THE FACTS

The scope and impact of global poverty are staggering.

Over 1.2 billion people live in absolute poverty on less than \$1 a day. Nearly half the world's people live on less than US\$2 a day. Every day, 50,000 people die from poverty related causes, and 29,000 of these are children under 5. The disparities between rich and poor are huge. The richest 20% of the world receives 86% of the world's income; the poorest 20% receives just 1.3%.

www.resultscanada.ca/action/actions/2004/2004-11-en.html

Food Banks and Meals

9-10 CLUB (ST. ANDREW'S SOUP KITCHEN)
740 View St. Victoria, B.C. V8W 1J8 ph: 388-5571 8 - 10am seven days a week
Church-run club providing daily meals on a drop-in basis.

ANAWIM COMPANION SOCIETY
973 Caledonia Street Victoria B.C. V8T 1E7 phone: 382-0283
Mon, Tues, Thurs 10am - 5 pm, Weds, Fri 10am –8pm, Sat 10am – 4pm
Laundry, showers, meals, clothing, limited housing spaces.

COMMUNITY FOOD BANK
4-697 Goldstream Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V9B 2X2 phone: 474-4443
Tues, Weds: 10am – 3pm, Closed last week of month

FOOD NOT BOMBS
Phone: 383-5144, Box 1940 Website: <http://resist.ca/~fnb-victoria>
Free vegetarian serving Sundays, 3 pm - Harris Green (Pandora & Vancouver)
Bring clean margarine, tofu containers for bowls, bags for produce.
Food Not Bombs is a collectively run (non-hierarchical) food kitchen.
Info: free-spirit@shaw.ca, miagirl95@yahoo.com

FREE COMMUNITY LUNCH
Esquimalt United Church Hall, Lyall St., just past Admirals Rd.
Tuesdays and Thursdays - 12 noon – 1:15 pm

FRUIT AND VEGGIE BOX
C/o Blanshard Community Centre phone: 388-7696
James Bay Community Project phone: 388-7844
WorkLink Employment Society phone: 478-9525
Victoria Native Friendship Centre phone: 384-3211
Wholesale prices, various size boxes. Pay first, pick up following wk.

JAMES BAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
140 Oswego Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 2B1 phone: 389-1470
-Seniors Dinners on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5 PM - \$5.75
-Community Dinners Weds, approx. every other mth, usually \$4 & \$2 /12 & under.
Tickets must be purchased at the centre in advance
-Community school cafe open Mon - Fri 11:45 am -12:30 pm. \$3.25 & child 2.75.

MEALS ON WHEELS
9751-3rd st. Sidney, B.C., V8L 3A5 phone: 655-9222
For residents of Greater Victoria who, because of age, disability or illness, are
unable to prepare an adequate meal for themselves, have inadequate cooking
facilities, have no one to prepare meals, or have health and social needs.
Referrals from doctors, health & Social Services agencies, concerned friends,
family, or personal requests.
Current cost of meals is \$6.00. In addition to nutritional benefits, some social
interaction.

MUSTARD SEED STREET CHURCH www.mustardseed.ca
625 Queens Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V8T 1L9 phone: 953-1575
Outreach: Mon-Fri 8am-4pm, Food bank: M,T, W, Th 9-11:45am, 12:30-2:00 pm
M, W, F - Family Hampers, Th - Singles & Couples w/out children.
Food bank is closed the week following welfare cheque day
Drop in for food, friendship, counseling, and crisis intervention.
Food hampers available. Restriction for clients to one visit per month.

OPEN DOOR SOCIETY
935 Pandora St, Victoria B.C., V8V 3P4 phone: 385-2454
Mon-Fri: 10am-12pm, 2-4pm, Sat&Sun: 8am -12pm, 1-3:30 pm
Free peanut butter sandwiches, doughnuts, coffee, tea. Free bread, sometimes
produce. Free clothing room, games room, counseling, and referrals.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY
828 View Street, Victoria B.C. V8W 1K2 phone: 382-0712
9 am–12:30 pm, 1:30 pm–4:30 pm Mon–Friday, Tues aft for Women
Must be 19 yrs, unless referred by parents, ASK, or Soc Services.
A variety of food, clothing, household items. Home visits, food vouchers for
parents supporting children.

SAINT SAVIOUR'S KITCHEN
310 Henry Street, Church Hall (VicWest) phone: 384-8773
For women and children, Weds and Fris, 12 noon – 1:30 pm

SALVATION ARMY, Family Services and Counselling (singles, too)
2695 Quadra, at Hillside ph: 386-8521 Monday – Friday, 9 am – 3:30 pm
Emergency food hampers, clothing & small housewares vouchers.

SIKH TEMPLE
Blackwood at Topaz (towards summit park), enter right side door
Every Sunday at noon - Free food serving, lentil dahl and chapatis, etc.

STREETLINK EMERGENCY SHELTER
1634 Store St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1S2 ph: 384-3634, office 383-1951
Free dinner 7 days a week, 3 pm for meal ticket, serving at 3:30

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE
1611 Quadra St., Victoria, B.C., V8W 2L5 phone: 383 7169.
Food bank open Tuesdays & Fridays, 10 am -noon, in church basement. (Closed
Friday and Tuesday after Welfare Wednesday, and Tuesdays after Monday stat.)

UPPER ROOM SOCIETY
919 Pandora Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V8V 3P4 phone: 388-7112
Office Hrs: Mon-Fri 9am–4pm Meals: Mon-Sat 12-1pm, 4–5:30 pm
Meal pass costs \$26 a month, or \$1 at the door.

Good Food Box Program - Duncan area - *where healthy eating is an act of
community.* 250-746-4204, www.providence.bc.ca, mlthomson@uniserve.com

Housing Resources

No Cost for Service, Time Limited Stay

Salvation Army 525 Johnson Street, 384-3396 Emerg men only

Streetlink 1634 Store Street, 383-1951

Sandy Merriman House 809 Burdette Avenue, 480-1408

Sobering and Assessment Centre 1125 Pembroke (at Cook)
213-4444 24 hr max for people under the influence of substances

Out of the Rain (Youth 15-25) 889-1490 Oct - April, various locations

Kiwanis Youth Shelter (13-18) 2117 Vancouver St., 386-8282

Hill House Women with children 479-3963

Sooke Transition House 642-2591 Women with or without children

Vic. Women's Transition House 385-6611 Women with or w/out kids

Cridge Centre for the Family 1190 Kings Rd 386-7291 Women & kids

Kiwanis House for single women 16-29 w/ one child 382-1004

Margaret Laurence House 995-0058 Women & kids escaping abuse

Low Cost Monthly Rentals

YWCA Women's Residence - 880 Courtney Street, 386-7511
Room \$425/month, stay limited to 3- month max

Ritz Hotel- 710 Fort Street, Room \$340- 370/month 381-1868

Fairfield Hotel 710 Cormorant St., Room \$340-370/mth 386-1621

York Hotel 711 Johnson Street, Room \$395/month 385-2544

Douglas Hotel 1450 Douglas Street, Rm without bath \$475
383-4157 (Mid September – end May only)

Ocean Island Backpackers 791 Pandora Avenue Rooms (some with bath)
385-1788 From \$250-490 (Oct - end of May)

Turtle Refuge Backpackers 1608 Quadra Street 386-4471
** Min. of Human Resources will not issue shelter funds for this **

Vic. Human Exchange Soc. 361- 2762, 1-800-691-9366,www.humanx.org.

Subsidized Housing Contact List

BC Housing 301- 3440 Douglas Street, 475-7550 www.bchousing.org

Burnside Gorge Community Association 388-5251

Cap. Region Housing 623 Fisgard, 388-6422 www.crd.bc.ca/housing

Coordinated Housing Registry 1410 Broad Street 356-2548

M'Akola Housing Society 384-1423

Pacifica Housing Advisory Assoc, 830 E Pembroke St. 385-2131

Pandora Youth Apts 753 Pandora, For 15- 19 yrs, Andrea - 380-2663

St. Vincent de Paul Soc. 382-2767 www.svdpvictoria.com/services/

Victoria Senior Citizen Housing Society #501-620 View, 384-3434

Housing Searches on the Internet

BC Housing Subsidized Housing List www.bchousing.org/Housing

Brown Bros. Property Management www.brownbros.com

Camosun Off Campus Housing List www.ccss.camosun.bc.ca

David Burr Property Management www.davidburr.com/

UVic Off Campus Housing www.housing.uvic.ca/offcampus/search.htm

Some places to call for help

Adult Addiction Comm. Treatment Serv: 228-1250 Quadra, 387-5077

AIDS Vancouver Island: 1601 Blanshard St., 384-2366

Alano Club: 1402 Broad St, 383-9151

Alcoholics Anon: #8, 2020 Douglas, 383-7744 (help), 383-0415 (off)

Foundation of Support of Recovery for Men: 480-1342

Outreach Services Methadone Clinic: 2004 Fernwood Rd., 480-1232

Salvation Army Addictions & Rehab Centre: 525 Johnson, 384-3396

Soc. of Living Intravenous Drugusers: 7-9 pm Wednesdays, 1947 Cook

Substance Information LINK: www.silink.ca

Victoria Native Friendship Centre: 610 Johnson Street, 384-3211

Victoria Sobering & Assessment Centre: 1125 Pembroke, 213-4444

Vancouver Island Addiction Recovery Soc.: 536 Cecelia, 480-1342



please send any corrections and/or additions to streetnewz@cedco.bc.ca

Bodhi's Path ... a serial ... episode four ...



Robert Lightheart Jones is a universalist Friend who explores the many ways beings express the great dance of life of which we are but a small part. He's recently settled into what he hopes is a new home (subsidized housing on the edge of the 'burbs). Robert invites reaction and storyline suggestions c/o streetnewz@cedco.bc.ca.

On the front door Bodhi had made a sign which reflected the changed character of the house . "Friendly Persuasions Co-op," it said . Since Freyja had moved in things were cooking around there. After years of being a denizen of the night working as an orderly in a hospital, Albert had decided to give days another chance. He smiled more and had a contented sleek look about him. He had even begun to wear slippers around the house. Although he was groggy when he got up his long bony face would light up when he smelled the elaborate breakfasts that Freyja and Bodhi put together.

"Morning...you guys. Will Lil and Blossom be here this morning now that the back yard project is finished?" he asked.

"Nope, Lil says she wants no more to do with me since, as she said, I'm 'Sleeping with the enemy...'"

"That would be me, right?"

"Fraid so. Already taking generous offers for your scalp, whiteman! Left us her cat Spike then they took off yesterday for Florida. I guess Blossum figures she'll have a better chance of finding a no-strings-daddy-type on the beaches..."

"So, is Spike as warped as she is, Bodhi ?"

Tiger Lil's cat, or ' TLC' as Bodhi calls him, truly a gentleman fellow- traveller. He came operating in 'in-front-of-hearth' mode. Indications of life?! His tail and eyelids twitched on cue, recording movements of feet, but not reacting to them. A scatter rug occasionally at meal times did smarmy leg circling stroke moves, but otherwise was in silent slug mode. Switches were turned off... 'I don't care if you stumble.... I'm certified- bonafide-electroglide-bomb-proof.' He has given ennui a style all its own. When picked up he looks up as if to say oh, am I on? Yawning and massaging with just a hint of claw to check for Bodhi's vital signs ... couldn't I just buzz a while? Would you settle for something less energetic... I can still do Cheshire if you want.

He likes his catnip but prefers pot. While rolling Bodhi a joint of the miracle weed, his evident interest is piqued and he transforms into stalk mode. TLC's eyes rivet on every movement of Bodhi's fingers as if he was watching for style points (will he drop it...if I lunge...or should I merely outwait him and stare him down.) Bodhi recognizes a cat with a past. Things the cat does not do are interesting. His former mistress had a lot of sacrosanct plants. TLC avoids them with utter disdain. He can out last each of them. He's seen a lot of plants bite the dust. As he passes, each one gets a withering glance.(I shall prevail... cost is nothing.) He unctuously fakes purrs, and has a mannered style; (I'm bored but okay , admit it: beats the hell out of cheap carpeting. We'll take this up over dinner. Throw in a little fresh litter, and I'll cat-rug with you later.)

Bodhi can work with him on his lap, suffering only if he tenses up his thigh muscles to support TLC's fourteen pound bulk; then out comes a silent, symbolic and surgically exact claw. TLC does not even mutter---rather spooky in his spectral languorousness. His tastes are strange; he likes his Mozart filtered through Spike Jones or singing dogs rather than straight up like a real man.

TLC's the perfect model for drawing. His fur has stark, bold, graphic contrasts, black on white or white on black. Panda-like. Pansy faced with mauve ears, veiled white inside like a face behind a thin oriental fan Each shell-like ear is

black-tipped in white fur. His kohled lids intersect bands of turban-like black accentuating the starkly contrasting white face amber eyes peeking through a half black open bead curtain The only black on the white of his face was a tip of nose and a D'artagnon VanDyke. The glacial whiteness flows down to perfect, black tux-lapel . He has a saddle of glossy black and a big thumping dark plume ostrich-feather duster of a tail. When he moves, he's Gene Kelly in Astaire's spats. His stately progress to the litter pan is dignified. Occasionally, when he mis-judges the loft of the down comforter of the bed, he'll tumble off the back edge and thump to the floor. He makes no comment but walks on as though nothing unusual has occurred. It is merely part of his planned minor course correction.

Bodhi is sitting in a large lawn chair enjoying the warm sun with TLC in the newly completed back yard. They have made an opening in the fence with an ornamental iron gate which allows them to watch the parade on the street. A man wearing an out-sized overcoat and a full tangle of beard stops at the gate, and peers in, setting down his garbage bags. His eyes hunger for acknowledgement or recognition. Bodhi knows the man's state and gently reaches to lift TLC down. Suffering the token claw-nick, he walks to the gate.

"How goes it? Enjoying this beautiful sunshine?" asks Bodhi, for want of a better opening conversational gambit.

"Don't guess you need any yard work done, do ya? How 'bout I ask if you got any spare change....," the man asks hopelessly.

"I'll make you a better offer. Lunch is on the back burner in our bottomless soup pot. If you have no other plans, perhaps you'd like to join us?"

He opened the gate, and the man walked in. TLC lead the small procession up the back steps.

"You can hang your coat by the door there, if you'd like. The others will be down directly. Freyja! Albert ! We have a guest for lunch..."

The man soon tucked into the big bowl of hot soup, with Bodhi seated opposite, chatting about the simple joys of vegetables, and necessity of barley to make soup stock. The man's face seemed to drop its cares as he enjoyed the welcoming soup. The other two came down the steps. Albert was whispering something in Freyja's ear, and she laughed happily, digging him in the ribs with her elbow. Bodhi turned the coffee on for Albert, and got down two more bowls.

"My name is Freyja and this is my old man, Albert...You're Mister?"

"Zip...Just Zip...Um thanks for the food. It's great..."

"Our pleasure...Zip...Would you like a tuna fish sandwich? It won't take ..."

"No thanks, I gotta look for my bottles so I got enough to do supper and some of the guys are going to squat in this warehouse we found So we're okay tonight. Well, thanks again. Great cat you got there."

He started to back toward the doorway. Bodhi helped him on with his coat.

"Wait a minute Zip ... I got a rain cape you could use. It's seen a couple of seasons but still doesn't leak. Works as a groundsheet too"

Freyja reached under the coats hung in the back hall and found the big yellow slicker she wanted. She wrapped it around Zip's stooped shoulders. Albert looked on with concern, but didn't know what to say. He leaned against the wall with one shoulder. Bodhi and Freyja walked with Zip out to the gate. Bodhi bowed to Zip, his palms pressed together in blessing. Freyja watched and nodded too. Zip smiled a quiet thanks, and shouldering his bags, left. Bodhi felt a long link to the man, and knowledge that they would cross again. (TO BE CONTINUED)

The Victoria Human Exchange Society

In our fragile economy anyone can become homeless or lose a job almost overnight. Those who are still comfortably off are encouraged to share life's gifts with those who have already fallen on hard times, knowing that their turn may come.

We rent from sympathetic landlords who allow us sublet to persons in need, with at least 3 months away from drug/alcohol misuse. We have set up 9 houses for persons in transition - person's facing all sorts of challenges - who are welcomed into a 'family of friends' and given support.

Our Houses are in Victoria (5) Sidney (2) and SaltSpring Island (2).

Our objectives are to supply short-term housing (3 -6 months, or more in some cases) and give support to homeless and challenged persons who are stable in their recovery from any drug/alcohol misuse.

2005 is our 13th anniversary. On Valentine's Day, 1992, a gathering was held in the Fernwood Community Gardens in Victoria--a vigil for those who died on Victoria's streets. Particularly mourned was Larry Baker.

The gathering was convened by Stephen Glanville who then lived in a bus at the site. People came from City Hall, different existing agencies, from the local neighborhood, and all over Victoria. They were united by their desire to do assist those who were living under the Johnson St. Bridge, in Beacon Hill Park, and around Victoria's streets. This gathering gave birth to the idea of the Human Exchange. Mary Gordon, founding member, gave us the motto from the writings of Thomas Merton: "Every meeting of persons can be an exchange of life's gifts."

The Linda Jim House is named in memory of one of our founding members, now deceased, who belonged to the Apple Tree Club under the Johnson St. Bridge. For more info: page 361- 2762 in Greater Victoria or 1-800-691-9366 outside Victoria, or check the website at www.humanx.org.

inauguration day captured at
<http://images.indymedia.org/imc/washingtondc/media/image/9/large/protest.slide1.jpg>





TOWARD A NEW VISION FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION (Part II)
Analysis From a Social Psychology Perspective

Released October 5 2004, by Dr. Elinor Powell - www.heartofconflict.com
for the Faith in Action Coalition - www.bcfaithinaction.ca

Research findings relating to attitudes toward groups and their members different from our own.

If we are to view the allocation of our province's resources more objectively and effectively, we need to understand what is going on here in our social relationships and in our willingness to help each other. For this the social psychologists can provide some insights. These professional researchers have quite a bit to say about relationships between favoured groups and those not so favoured.

1. Concerning perceived personal worth. Research has shown repeatedly, and over a wide variety of situations, that human beings view people within their own groups as automatically more worthy than those who do not belong to that group. The view that members of groups considered outside their own are somehow less worthy of respect and care is not only seen in governments (whether they support either a left-wing or a right-wing agenda). This view is a common human failing. As such, it must be taken into account when enacting the laws of governance for all our citizens, to ensure balance, justice and equity.

2 Concerning perceived motivations of others. Social psychologists have further observations about attitudes toward the motivations of members in our own group, compared to those outside it. Untoward events happening to members of the group with which we identify are usually deemed to be due to *circumstances*, while similar events happening to members of other groups are believed to be due to those people's own *defaults of character*. So if my friend loses his job, I am likely to suppose it was due to some situation over which he had little control. But someone from a background different from mine may be blamed for losing an opportunity due to a character defect such as laziness or dishonesty.

3. Concerning differing social status and our perceptions of others. In addition, social psychologists have found that our decision-making and perceptions are affected by our views of other's socioeconomic status. People of lower socioeconomic status are likely to be negatively perceived by those of higher economic status. These factors are cumulative: just by being from another group makes these others to be perceived as inferior, and if in addition, they are of lower economic standing, then they are doubly marked down.

4. Stereotyping others. Yet again, we tend to see people who belong to different groups, such as members of a different race, or a different social strata, in stereotyped fashion, and these stereotyped beliefs become difficult to change. For instance, we may have a generally negative view of people belonging to a certain nationality or ethnic group. "People from (you name the country) are so (you name the derogatory characteristic)," we believe. When individuals from this background act in a way that is contrary to our negative stereotype for their group, e.g., acting with generosity, then that behaviour is often dismissed as an aberration. The negative expectation overrides the experience of the more positive behaviour and the stereotype

remains unaltered.

5. Lumping them all together. Furthermore, we tend to see people from other groups as more homogenous than our own. Yet every group contains people of great diversity, and none more so than those who have fallen on hard times, as experience with this population will attest.

This last finding requires some fleshing out.

To identify some of the ways that those in poverty demonstrate great diversity one may appreciate their different:

- * historical backgrounds, cultural norms and contexts in which they find themselves.
- * spheres and degrees of capability, in a vast array of different skills relating to both daily living and work-related aptitudes
- * personality and intelligence,
- * health and self-sufficiency
- * ability or lack of it to improve on their present situation
- * gifts of the spirit such as courage, resilience, trust, and hope.

Clients may come from a long inheritance of joblessness; alternatively, they may have recently fallen from high office; they may have been laid off in a time of changing markets, or they may have been in and out of work for years.

Some may come from a background where help might, for cultural reasons, be expected to come from their own community, yet this is no longer available because of geographical separation. Where the community has been disrupted by intrusions, such as the Residential School program for First Nations peoples in an earlier generation, that community help will not be forthcoming in many instances (although some Bands have progressed enormously in restorative and cultural work). Those whose cultural norm is to rely on family members and their own communities may find approaching any government agency particularly difficult. Their reception under present government approaches may confirm their worst fears.

Diversity within affected populations is also played out in the unique ups and downs in the progression of the peoples' paths through life. Now they must present themselves in a context of marginalization, unable to cope with their situation on their own, forced to seek help from a system that, at present, bespeaks of an ideology that is blaming, coercive and derogatory.

In summary, social psychologists tell us we tend to see people who belong to other groups, especially when they are of lower social or economic status, as less worthy and more homogenous than those with whom we identify. These attitudes make it especially hard for people who are dependent upon us in time of need, and must be taken into account when providing for them. This, it appears, the Provincial government has failed to do.

Next issue:

AUDIT OF A MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES SURVEY: an illustration of the social psychologist's findings.

photo: the poor peoples' levee tour choir, New Year's Day, Oak Bay.



Greenpeace vs. Kleenex

To protect Canada's Boreal Forest, Greenpeace has launched a campaign to convince Kimberly-Clark, the company that makes Kleenex and other tissue products, to stop destroying ancient forests. They can easily do this by using recycled sources for their product fibre.

The Texas-based paper giant, last year, used 2,550,000 metric tonnes of virgin fiber.

For more information:
www.kleercut.net

Some interesting results from the Time-Ekos public opinion polls in the November 1st edition of Time magazine.

- 53% of Canadians oppose joining the American missile "shield" while only
- 37% support joining. 24% strongly oppose joining, while only 9% strongly support joining.
- 54% of Canadians regard the U.S. as "a world bully".
- 78% say that the U.S. looks after its own self interests.
- 59% have a negative view of GW Bush, only 17% positive.
- 91% say Canada has more tolerant citizens
- 81% say Canada is more respected internationally
- 70% say Canada has better educated citizens
- 67% said the re-election of GWB would have a negative impact on world peace and stability
- 74% said that the U.S. was not justified in invading Iraq
- 84% said Canada was justified in NOT joining the U.S. in Iraq
- From: Mel Hurtig(mhurtig@telusplanet.net)

ALTERNATIVE RADIO

Victoria's CFUV - from UVic
101.9 FM, 104.3 cable, cfuv.uvic.ca

Winds of Change - Mondays 1-2 pm
Gorilla Radio - Mondays 5-6 pm
The Hidden News - Fridays 9-10 am
Not-for-Profit Radio - Fridays 8 AM

Vancouver's Coop Radio
CFRO - 102.7 FM
Listen online at www.coopradio.org

Village 900 am from Camosun College

SFU Radio - www.cjsf.bc.ca/

Indy Radio radio.indymedia.org

Radio 4 All - Radio4all.net

Air America Radio - airamericaradio.com

ASK MARGARET DRYSDALE

Often confused with the fictitious Beverly Hillbillies character, this banker's wife - and self-defined princess - offers discrete advice to businessmen, preferably CEOs, with large inheritances.

A staunch believer in global corporate capitalism, Margaret is thrilled to offer her feminine wiles to Victoria Street Newz.

Dear Margaret Drysdale,

I just had to let you know about the brand new SUV my husband has just bought me for Christmas, but regretablely there is a sad note to my story.

At first, I was delighted with my enormous new Lincoln Navigator, with its immensely powerful 5.7 litre engine, spiked tires and 23 cup-holders. Of course, 10 miles per gallon might not seem that efficient to some, but it does come equipped with a lake for a tank, so it is possible to drive between gas stations without the Jerry-can. It has been such a pleasure to bash through our recent snow-blizzard without a care for the world!

Of course, our city snow removal teams headed immediately to clear our Uplands and Broadmead neighbourhoods at the first sign of a snowflake. After all, we obviously needed to be the number one priority for this service as all of our neighbours are totally dependent on giant gas-sucking SUV's. If they hadn't cleared our streets, we might have had to stoop to taking the bus to our manicures! It sure was hilarious, seeing all those stupid pedestrian' sliding around and falling down on all



those icy sidewalks a week after the last snowfall. Why don't they all get SUV's like us Street Newz readers? Thankfully, the city got its priorities right, and spent its entire snow-removal budget on motorists.

The sad part was when I was driving around downtown doing a few errands, I saw that

Valhalla Pure, that trendy-yuppie Gore-Tex supplier which sells those lovely \$500 raincoats, has gone and bought themselves a brand new V-10 HUMVEE!! When I saw that, I had to admit, now how could I be seen driving around in such an ordinary tin-pot? I want a HUMVEE! What is the life without a HUMVEE?!

But what really disturbed me was when I got behind Valhalla's massive military assault-vehicle, instead of the derigeuer Yellow-Ribbon 'Support-Our-Troops' bumper-sticker, I was shocked to see, a large 'Peace' symbol instead!! Now what an insult to those brave American video-terminal push-button warriors who are over there in Iraq, securing those oil-fields so that we can motor around in our SUV's!! What hypocrisy from Valhalla Pure! On the one hand, they buy into the oil-consuming, planet-killing military-industrial complex by purchasing a HUMVEE, and on the other hand, they plaster some bleeding-heart whining wimp-ass Peacenik symbol on the back of it!

Now, while the world watches the poor old USA military being shit-kicked once again by an impoverished, totally disarmed and starved

after 12 years of sanctions 3rd-world country, we all should be supporting our neighbours, even if they are the world's largest debtor nation!

Margaret, please let all your readers know that they should BOYCOTT Valhalla Pure! They could always buy their Gore-Tex at that other lovely American store that sells to the rich and famous, Eddie Bauer, instead! (And as for Valhalla Pure, I'll show you! Here's a picture of the brand new uber-SUV that I'm trading in my Navigator for!)

Happy Motoring!
Mrs. Ima B. G. Gordosaur Esq.

Dearest Ima,

So lovely to hear from you again. Your wise words are so encouraging to we status-quo visionaries!

Why, indeed, should there be any restraints on our ability to motor freely throughout the world! Those peaceniks - not to mention cyclists, roller-bladers, scooterists, and pedestrians - are limiting our freedoms in so many ways. They think they have a right to be on the road ... they should get their own roads, I say!

Do you know, our American neighbours burn 5.5 billion gallons of gasoline each year just from idling while waiting in traffic. And have you heard hullabaloo those pesky environmentalists are raising around the off shore oil drilling proposal? They claim the seismic tests rock the ocean floor and hurt fish. Where are we to acquire the necessary fuel for our status symbols, if not from the ocean floor?! Thank goodness for the tar-sands next door in Alberta.

Who cares about environmental impact. I'm going to be dead and gone some day, so I might as well whoop it up now before I go.

Carry on, darling, protected in your trendy tank, and thanks so much for dropping me a line.

Cheers!
Margaret Drysdale



Margaret awaits your queries or comments at streetnewz@cedco.bc.ca

The real-life on-going drama of David and the "Right to Sleep" Campaign

The events leading up to what I describe as 'The Occupation of St. Ann's Academy

Living outside since Nov. 2000, I've slept often in Beacon Hill Park and at the beach that is akin to it. By the winter of 2003 there was an escalation of 'deterrent' events which include being woken up by parks staff and/or police (who've been presumptuous, condescending and threatening), a smelly substance which I found out later was undiluted plant fertilizer, ground up fish, left on known sleeping spots. Fatigue breeding fearlessness, not long after the blizzard that hit on the cusp of 2004 it occurred to me to bring these absurdities to light, knowing that the cause of the suffering I was being exposed to rested in the police's, parks staff's and city's hands.

So, on January 16, 2004, I and a few others set up tents on the grounds of St. Ann's Academy as it is open and close to downtown. Dealings with the police and the PCC had the majority of people moved along the next day, yet I

stayed, knowing it was only going to be through the courts that this matter could be resolved. The 'Mischief' charge is from mid-June to Nov. 4th, 2004. Instead of 'due process' the police and the PCC (Provincial Capital Commission) began a full regiment of discomfort in the hopes that I would move along. This 'regiment' included a number of arrests (some for 'Assault by Trespass which changed to 'breach of peace' when we got to the police station). There were more than 15 separate nights in cells. I was driven out of city limits on 6 occasions.

For 20 days the province hired a security guard with the express purpose of not letting me sleep (a job that was done in varying degrees with 4 absolutely sleepless nights - a guy above your head clapping his hands, stomping his feet, playing loud music, shining a bright light in my eyes and saying things like 'don't be falling asleep on me, Mr. Johnston' or 'if you just hit one of us you would expediate the situation, Mr. Johnston'). Other than those occasions there were constant early morning wake ups and a

constant seizing of blankets and sleeping gear.

The garbage that is referred to in the 'Mischief' charge were my cardboard houses (which I built about 16 of because of the weather and lack of blankets - each, subsequently, taken down each morning by PCC staff.

I would not have been able to get as far as I have without much meditation on patience. I feel like a veteran on the front lines of a real war that is happening right now.

Do I have any rights here?

Patience be with you.

David Arthur Johnston, Victoria, BC, Canada
Hatrackman@yahoo.com
www.angelfire.com/apes/hatrackman/welcome.htm

"The Provincial Capital Commission is the proud steward of many provincially owned properties and heritage buildings in BC's capital city of Victoria. Our mission is 'Connecting and celebrating the Capital with every British Columbian.' The PCC is a Provincial Crown Agency." www.bccpc.com

OH Canada

Too often in this wonderful country of ours people count what they don't have, what is wrong and what they want to change about our way of life, government policy and social systems. During my four months in Europe I had the privilege to really put my ideas about Canadian life under the microscope. In the end all I can see is the openness

and freedom within our nation, which was started by some very courageous people who fled the thumb of tradition to sail across the ocean and start a new life in North America.

Visiting eight countries during my educational, art filled adventure abroad, the only country that really made a 'take it home' impact was Ireland. As a primarily English speaking country, I presumed it would have the same "first world" life we know here in North America, boy was I wrong. Knowing of this country's internal struggle for peace among its faith driven citizens, I was totally unaware of the pure lack of.... well there seemed to be something lacking everywhere I turned.

My trip to the Emerald Isle was initiated by my community development project Mosaic the City. We ran a weeklong workshop teaching ideas of Community Unity to a group of social workers, teachers, health professionals and artists in Tallaght, South County Dublin, which in 1972 was injected with nearly thirty thousand poor people as part of the *Dublin County Development Plan*. People were literally picked up from the Dublin city core and dropped off nearly forty kilometers away. This year the population in Tallaght has reached more than 300,000 and is one of the fastest growing urban centers in all of Europe.

No social system can uphold the need and demand of these numbers. The Development Plan had not expected this kind of growth. **Tallaght received their first shopping mall one year ago and their hospital only in 2002. Until about four months before our arrival their only public transportation, a bus that only came two times per day, took nearly two hours to Dublin both ways. The Luas, their new rapid transit system, had only started providing the residents of Tallaght reasonable transportation to town in the summer of 2004.**

This area of Ireland has a huge illiteracy rate, and many students leave school at fifteen or sixteen years of age. There is a huge population of youth with children, and a staggering unemployment rate with nearly one quarter of the population without work.

This Mosaic the City (MtC) project was lead and partnered with the *Tallaght Community Arts Center* and *The Adelaide & Meath Hospital*. By bringing MtC to Tallaght, we helped bring some Community Unity to the area by helping the people become more attached and part of their neighbourhoods. We gave them a creative way to express their values, cultures and traditions which then became a piece of community public art, which can be enjoyed by all. Unlike most public art, MtC projects are all accompanied by a plaque, which outlines the people and purposes behind each project.

Throughout my journey through Europe I was only able to see one piece of public art that created this connection to people and their values to their community. This was a monument about Irish famine victims and survivors. Created in brass it showed some of what they went through in Ireland so many years ago. It also speaks of the struggles they are still experiencing, and it showed me just how lucky most Canadians are to have rarely suffered like this, but we must remember we are descendents of a land much older, much bloodier and much harder to change.

By *S.Shylene Schlackl*, a "recycle" artist interested in community, both local and global. Shylene has inspired many local mosaic projects (mosaicthecity.com).



A Room of Her Own

Marlene Dyrda enjoys being busy, and that's why she's so often found at the James Bay Thrifty's, accepting donations for the Victoria Street Newz paper.

Born in Victoria's General Hospital in 1955, Marlene spent her formative years helping maintain the family's 10 acre hobby farm in Central Saanich. She and her family - including a mom, a dad, and two younger brothers - raised chickens and cows, and picked various types of berries and apples from their orchard.

An idyllic lifestyle, some might say, but Marlene's challenges began early. She was an avid reader with a thirst for learning, but imperfections in her eyesight made it difficult to focus and concentrate. Her teachers didn't understand - they moved Marlene in and out of classrooms in their attempts to find her learning strengths, abilities, and weaknesses. Marlene felt under-stimulated and awkward in a special needs class and at 17, bored and frustrated, she chose to spend her time reading on her own.

For a while Marlene earned some money housekeeping, and at 20 she moved away from the family home. She was working in a coffeeshop when her first child was born and, a devoted mother, chose to stay home and raise her child. She accepted social assistance after about three months of being a single mom. Two children and a husband followed, and Marlene's family survived thanks to subsidized housing.

When her children were no longer with her, Marlene brought people-in-need into her modest home. Unfortunately, rules were broken, she found herself evicted and, for seven long years, Marlene lived on the streets or in temporary residences. To survive she collected bottles and panhandled, but one day her luck began to change. She connected with a long-term family friend who offered her a place to stay, and then she found the Street Newz. Tired of panhandling (although it's better than stealing, she says), Marlene began to regularly appear - Street Newz in hand - outside the James Bay Thrifty's.

"Everything about the Street Newz is good. I especially like the housing listings, the listings for foodbanks, the community calendar, and the resource list because people come to Victoria and don't have a clue where to go. And it's good for me because I have something to do, something to look forward to. It's demoralizing sitting by the side of the road and having to deal with insults and rudeness."

For about 12 years Marlene has survived on a disability pension. Her challenges continue, however. There's not a lot of subsidized or affordable housing for single adults. and Marlene's eyesight continues to plague her with headaches and pain. The BC Liberals, when elected, removed the opportunity for residents to access free eye examinations, so Marlene had to negotiate with the Ministry for help with the Optometrist's charges, taking migraine medication to help alleviate the pain while waiting for their assistance. She's finally seen the eye-doctor, and faces another difficult decision - she can either pay \$70 for corrective lenses now, or wait until March when the government will consider her eligible again for new frames.

Marlene will be 50 years young in 2005, and she's still searching for a permanent place to live. Her pension allows only \$325 a month for housing. Still, she lives with hope that someone from the housing registry will someday contact her to tell her she finally has a room of her own, perhaps with a small garden she can enjoy in her elder years.

By *Bernadine Sperling* and *Janine Bandcroft*



On the 15th anniversary of the House of Commons' resolution to end child poverty, more than one million children remain in poverty in Canada. Log on to Campaign 2000 (www.campaign2000.ca) and send a message to the Prime Minister, leaders of the Opposition and your MP letting them know how you feel about making Canada's children and families a priority.

poetry art and music

MONEY RULES
THE SPIRIT LIBERATES

God's Creation

On the first day of creation
God created chocolate and chocolate people.
On the second day of creation
God created vanilla and vanilla people.
On the third day of creation
God created tobacco.
On the fourth day of creation
God created cannabis and hashish.
On the fifth day of creation
God created hops and barley.
On the sixth day of creation
God created co-mingling.
On the seventh
God sat back and started to laugh.

Debbie Norton

Sister Marie Hélène

In the dark cold gloomy ghetto of mid-
Montréal
lurks a mysterious spiritual phantom
who is no doubt God's all!

The angel of mercy or sister of Christ,
this heavenly maiden is full of fiest.
She's got the face of a saint
and you know it's not paint.
One encounter with Sister Marie Hélène and
her angel eyes
will bring you to faint and not despise.
She's known as Sister Marie Hélène,
the justice fighting nun.

So brother if your intentions are shoddy,
you'd better run!
Because Sister Marie Hélène knows
God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son.
Ministering unto the poor and those in need
is this dynamic do-gooders holy deed.

The Lonely, the Lepers, and those in despair
are shown her unconditional love and tender
care.
For as swift as a lightning bolt,
after she ministers a healing holy stare,
Sister Marie Hélène disappears
to only God knows where.

Mark Idczak

telling the world that we are 'raping BC's forests' - where's your conscience?"

And they yard the logs - a dirty, back breaking job that - but someone's gotta do it.

Kim said, "I am the Director of Environmental Policy for the IWA - I have been for years - I know you people - you don't care about the environment anymore than you care about working people and their families. You collect money to 'Save Nature from the horrible loggers' and use it to fund a world-wide campaign of lies about forest practices in BC while you build comfortable, over-paid bureaucratic jobs for yourselves."

And they load the logs - a dirty job, that, lots of pressure - but someone's gotta do it.

Mike tried to find some middle ground, saying, "As Premier of the Province and head of the government, it's my job to find a peaceful resolution to this 'War in the Woods' - we can't have communities split apart over this - we can't have the world thinking that we are the 'Brazil of the North' - it is essential that the citizens of the province find a way to work together towards a sustainable future.

And they haul the logs - dangerous business that, but someone's gotta do it.

60 First Nations representatives from the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations and the First Nations Summit, and observers from the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and other First Nations said, "Northwest and Interior First Nations will stand united, with each other, and with the environmental community," said Carrier Sekani Tribal Chief Mavis Erickson. "We will stand together in exercising our ownership of the trees in our homelands."

"Government and industry are looking for certainty, but only First Nations can provide that certainty," said First Nations Summit task group member Edward John. "Given recent forestry legislative changes, there is no certainty. Until proper accommodation happens neither the marketplace, nor the investment community, will have certainty.

And still they ship the logs overseas - just good business that - someone's gotta do it - just good business that - cutting down peoples' lives with every tree that's exported - just good business that - gutting rural communities, destroying the ancient forests - just good business that.

After all, business is business ... what else could you expect to happen?

dani rubin



Tempting Fate

Cocaine is a lover for cowards and fools
Seductive
Such love spells betrayal
It controls
Dubbed as a woman
misogyny land
She'll depress you
Royally
If you take her hand
She also provides
A cloak and a cover
For intimacy between men
Afraid of the other
Devotion is rampant
It does reveal
Her favours will force you
To lie and to steal
But nothing will stop you
It's clearly abuse
She owns you
You know it
Still won't quit her use
No insight repels you
To try and steer clear
No lesson compels you
To view life as dear
So you keep using
You err and you err
How very sad
It is to occur
She's so cruel and evil
Yet she gets her way
Once more you continue
To use her today
Again and again
You keep tempting fate
But you could still leave her
Before it's too late!

Phyllis Kahn



I Got a Family to Feed

Lenny came to me and said, "Now listen here. I've got a wife and young family to feed - sure I understand that we have to respect nature and save the environment and all that stuff - but we gotta eat, ya know."

And they cut the trees - dangerous and brutal business that - but someone's gotta do it.

Stan came to me saying, "This is not what my constituents voted me into office for. They expect a good standard of living with reasonable job security, good schools, and a well-funded medical system. How can I do this - how can I adequately fund these necessary social programs, if you people keep



Carol Romanow reads the Street Newz!
(and helps with SOLID - momma@vcn.bc.ca)



Hide and Go Homeless

An amateur documentary film made by young people with absolutely no film-making experience.

This film reflects the filmmakers themselves: young, angry, critical, and in one way or another directly effected by circumstances related to poverty. Despite their lack of experience, each of the filmmakers captured what they feel is a 'true' account of why poverty and homelessness exist in Victoria. The end result is a sad but true documentary that leaves one questioning the moral, social, and political fabric of our society.

"Hide & Go Homeless" can be acquired from Mask Removal Productions, (250) 360-2913, maskremovalproductions@telus.net

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Federal MPs:

www.vindicator.ca/vindicator/membersList.asp

Provincial MLAs:

<http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/mla/3-1-3.htm>



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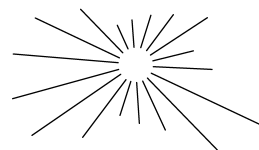
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Victoria Street Newz Vendors



Marlene



Ted and Bok



Shirley



Kay, 94
"there's a whole lot of hypocrisy in our democracy."



Debbie



Ken



John

Others:
James,
Maggie,
Gordon

From Saveley (Cecil) Planedin and Jennifer Whittall



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the numbers			
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Paper & Printing Costs	879.57	1085.39	918.15
Office - CEDCO Victoria	30.00	40.00	35.64
Wages & Salaries	283.43	940.81	563.12
Cartoons	8.00	0.00	0.00
Misc. (postage, fees, etc.)	42.39	56.38	93.05
T-shirts	0.00	120.00	0.00
Submissions	0.00	0.00	28.00
Share Deposit			50.00
Ttll Operating Expenses	1243.39	2242.58	1687.96
Revenue (To Jan 23rd)			
Advertising (payment rec'd)	275.00	85.00	25.00
Paper Sales	518.39	864.90	957.96
Donations	250.00	1057.68	545.00
Subscriptions	200.00	235.00	160.00
Fundraiser at UVic	0.00	108.50	0.00
Milk JUGernauts fundraiser	0.00	152.26	0.00
Ttll Operating Revenue	1243.39	2242.58	1687.96

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Henry Friedlander, The Origins of Nazi Genocide, 1995

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